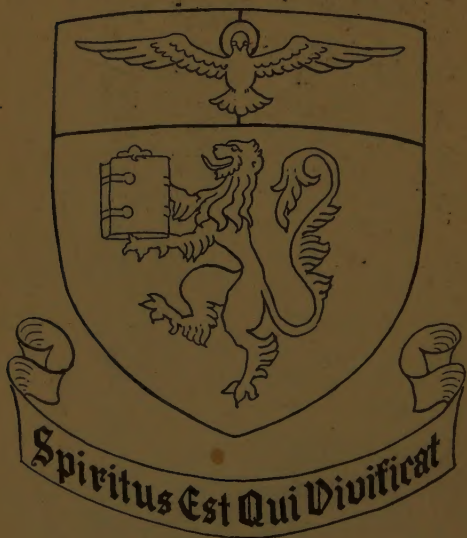


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John A. Downey

ON HURLEY HILLS

AND OTHER VERSE

BY

ELIAS D. SMITH



BOSTON

SHERMAN, FRENCH & COMPANY

1911

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TO
THE MANY FRIENDS
WHO IN YEARS PAST
HAVE SO PATIENTLY BORNE
WITH ME

NOV 20 '81

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NOTA BENE

These rhymes were written at various times in a busy life for my own pleasure. Yet a few friends have expressed a desire to see them gathered together, and I hope blame will not be heaped upon me, now that I have acceded to the request.

A goodly proportion are re-union odes, read at the annual gatherings of the regiment to which I am proud to have belonged during the Civil War, the 14th Regt. N. J. Vols. 6th Corps.

THE AUTHOR.

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ON HURLEY HILLS
AND OTHER VERSE

ON HURLEY HILLS

ON Hurley hills,
In beauty, day-break flushes fall;
Night, fleeing, draws aside her pall;
The stars grow dim and from the East
The first faint rays of light are cast
In tender thrills
On Hurley hills.

On Hurley hills
The morning sun slants long and low;
The hill-tops quiver in the glow,
The meadows hold their veil of mist,
Soft web of pearl and amethyst
From fairy mills
On Hurley hills.

On Hurley hills
The sun sinks slowly in the west
Flecking the flame-tinged mountain crest,
Long shadows steal across the vales,
The hollows darken—daylight fails
With quiv'ring thrills
On Hurley hills.

On Hurley hills
The night comes down. The twinkling star
Looks from its heavenly place afar—
No sound is heard in earth or sky,
But Heaven to Earth seems drawing nigh,
And peace distils
On Hurley hills.

LITTLE BOY JACK

It was just a brief note that she hurriedly
wrote

And then on the wings of the lightning it
sped,

And stopped at my door. I soon read it o'er:

"Our little boy Jack is dying," she said.

This was all that she said, but I saw overhead

The cloud that was hanging dark over our
home,

Nestling under the hill so peaceful and still,

And the note meant only the one word
"come."

By day and by night, in the darkness and light,

Back to my home I hurriedly sped,

And stood at my door. The struggle was
o'er,

"Our little boy Jack is dead," she said.

HOPE

"The harp that once thro' Tara's halls
The soul of music shed,
Now hangs as mute on Tara's walls
As if that soul were fled."—THOS. MOORE.

THE hand that struck its chords, no more
Shall wake its tones to life,
Nor sweep its strings as oft before
To sing of love or strife.

The old-time minstrel's hand is still,
The "soul of music" still remains;
A gentler hand the harp shall thrill,
And sing in sweeter strains.

THE LOITERER'S FAREWELL

How can I bear to leave thee,
One parting thought I give thee,
On thy bright waters flowing,
One fond last look bestowing.
Farewell! Farewell, rock-set Mohonk.

Swift have the hours been flying,
Delights each day denying,
Yet other pleasures bringing
Round which my thoughts are clinging.
Farewell! Farewell, rock-set Mohonk.

From thy rock-mounted chalets
We scan the outspread valleys,
Or watch the sunset gleaming,
With golden radiance streaming.
Farewell! Farewell, rock-set Mohonk.

Sweet are thy buds and flowers,
Thy woodland walks and bowers,
Balmy thy air—life giving—
Life sure is here worth living.
Farewell! Farewell, rock-set Mohonk.

Though other scenes may woo me,
No fairer spot comes to me;
When far away I'm straying,
Still will my heart be saying
Farewell! Farewell, rock-set Mohonk.

REGRET

ALONG the gray sands two lovers were stray-
ing

Where sea-birds flew,

Where on the low shore the bright waves were
playing

And the soft breezes blew.

The sun sank low while the lovers were stray-
ing

And each to the other sweet secrets was saying

While the soft breezes blew

In the long, long ago.

No more by the shore the lovers are straying.

Heigh-ho! Heigh-ho!

The years have crept on. Time makes no de-
laying.

Heigh-ho! for the long ago!

Memory now on their heart strings is playing,

Each still for the other is heard sadly saying,

While the soft breezes blow,

“Heigh-ho! for the long ago.”

A FANCY FLIGHT

(Presentation Ode.)

HIGH up above the mountain top
Where storm-clouds sweep and lightnings
flash,

Unmoved by storm or tempest blast,
By tawny Tiber's rolling flood,
See, floating in the ether there
The eagles of the upper air!

By tawny Tiber's rolling flood
Serene, in conscious majesty
In bygone years a city stood
And distant nations quaked to see
'Neath circling walls or gilded dome
The eagles of imperial Rome!

In later years an empire rose
And blazed its path through blood and smoke
At beck of one whose iron will
Made rulers tremble when he spoke.
In myriad camps, in sunlight shone
The eagles of Napoleon!

To-day the golden eagles swoop
And drop to earth, to serve our end.
They testify in slight degree
How much we value you, old friend.
For now, dear comrade, they shall prove
The eagles of our constant love.

THE SHORE-LIGHT

BRIGHT spark on yon low-lying shore! 'twixt
me and thee
Stretch troubled waves and many a hidden
rock and shoal;
Yet by thy friendly light I safely guide my
way
And peaceful steer my bark to its far-distant
goal.
So shall my life, forever cheered by Truth's
bright ray
Be led through darkest night to Love's eternal
day.

“THE WATER THAT SMOKES”

(Victoria Falls.)

MAJESTIC Thunder! Who, for ages gone
Had'st poured thy cadence to the woods alone,
To savage Klaffir, or more savage beast,—
A cadence that, once struck, has never ceased
Since God first formed thy rugged fissures

vast

And down thy walls this flood of waters cast—
Here, where thy mists have mounted to the

sky

To fall again upon the silent wood,
Here, where for æons past the white man's eye
Had never broached the solemn solitude,—
To these sequestered glades at last he came
And heard with reverence thy eternal roar.

Then, through the world he spread abroad thy
fame

That others too might worship and adore,
Then laid his bands of steel and wove his arch
Above thy boiling floods, to ape the bow
That hangs in splendor on thy feathery brow.
Hither we too have fared. We bare our heads
Before thy majesty. We feel thy power.
Above thy span the misty vapor spreads:
Around, it falls a glittering, gem-like shower:

Beneath, it veils the secrets all thine own,
And over all, there sounds thy thundering
monotone!

Great God of Nature! Who in ages past
Did'st rear this witness to Thy power so vast,
Accept this tribute of these later days,
Our weak attempt to voice a song of praise!

Rhodesia, Africa.

CUI BONO?

For æons past it guarded well
The mystery of its silent realm,
Unbroken by the foot of man
Unchallenged by a wandering helm.

For ages past men strove to grasp
The secret of the northern pole,
And treasures vast of blood and gold
Have been the constant, dreary toll.

For men have wrestled, toiled and died,
And ships upon an ice-bound track
Have sailed away to tempt the prize;
They sailed—but ah! they ne'er came back.

And now 'tis gained. We read the tale
Of wastes o'ercome, of barriers crossed;
Yet ever question in our hearts
What gain can compensate the cost.

Cui bono? This we sadly ask.
What is the gain to human good?
A brief applause, a transient fame
'Gainst all these years of gold and blood.

HOREB

I FLED to Horeb's mount
Care-worn, perplexed—
Great passions tore my soul,
Fierce conflicts vexed—
I fled to be alone and hide, apart
From man, the storm that tore my weary
heart.

I heard the whirlwinds rush
And felt the power
Of Nature's mighty breath
In my lone hour,
But it was naught to that tempestuous sweep,
The frenzied blast that stirred my inmost deep.

The earthquake rent the hills,
The mountains rocked,
Earth moaned in agony,
Beset and shocked,
But fiercer than the earthquake's mighty roar
The inward conflict that my bosom tore.

I saw from riven rock
The flames arise,
And Heaven's blinding flash
Fall from the skies,
But stronger than the lightning's blasting fire
Burned my own surging heart with furious ire.

These wonders passed from view
And then I heard
The "still small voice" of Love
And knew my God.
Upon my ear the gentle accents stole,
I bowed in awe and Peace came to my soul.

A SEA SONG

• FROM over the sea
There came a message of cheer to me.
My loved one had sailed for an Eastern shore,
Perchance I might never see her more,
But out of the East came a message to me
 From over the sea!

 Far over the sea!
My love, I know, is thinking of me.
When the sun sinks low and the night comes
 down,
Mantling the hilltop, the valley and town,
In the stillness a thought is given to me
 Far over the sea!

 From over the sea!
Come back again, love, come back to me!
Blow gently, ye gales, nor hinder the bark,
As she steadily sails thro' sunshine and dark,
Bearing so slowly my loved one to me
 From over the sea.

THE OLD AND THE NEW!

(Sabbath, Jan. 1, 1882, New Year's Day.)

WE stand where the passing year, dying,
Ended its sad lingering day;
And with all of its joys and its sorrows
Passed with the midnight away.
Great God, in the shade of Thy temple,
Stand we with deep, holy fear,
And we humbly confess our sad sinning
In the Old Year!

We stand where the coming year, smiling,
Promises pleasure and peace.
Bright Hope beckons onward, alluring;
Fancy paints joys ne'er to cease.
Great God, as we thus throng Thy temple,
And in Thy presence appear,
May we worthily honor and praise Thee
In the New Year!

THE MOUNTAIN-TOP

HIGH up in air on rugged cliffs I stand,
And view the mighty hills on every hand;
The cloud-swept peaks uplift their lofty forms,
Battling, for myriad years, with Winter's
 storms
And Summer's gales. Yet when the golden
 sun,
In changing bands of green and gray and dun,
Strikes the broad slopes and flecks the wooded
 sides
In whose cool bowers the forest flower hides,
Or gilds the naked crest, the snow-topped
 height,
The tumbling waterfall, with color bright,
I see the mighty force of kindliness
That touches roughness, but to soothe and
 bless.
The loving power that conquers stalwart
 might,
And bathes a world in gentleness and light;
The tender leading by a childish hand
Of man's rude nature I can understand.

ANTICIPATION

(Philippians 1:23.)

WHEN wilt thou call, O Lord,
And take me home?
When shall I hear thy welcome voice
Bidding my longing heart rejoice
And saying, "Come?"

I am not weary, Lord;
Life here is light.
Beyond desert have I been blest,
Of every good am I possessed;
My skies are bright.

Nor am I sad, O Lord,
Sick or heart-sore.
Health, wealth and fame are mine;
Love's friendships round me twine;
Earth gives no more.

Yet would I go, O Lord,
For Heaven is more to me.
The lamp burns pale in noon-day sun;
Earth's joys by Heaven's are outdone;
I would *Thy glory* see.

THE STONE STEPS OF CAPRI

(A Christmas Present.)

THE stone steps of Capri! what a funny
capri-ce,
How it carries the mind away
To Italy's shores and the isles of old Greece,
And the sunlight on Naples' blue bay.

That an artist should sketch the old steps of
Capri
Was a truly artistic conceit;
Adorning the wall in my snug library
It is hanging where we all can see it.

Up the cold stony stair the wayfarers climb,
In a clime that is sunny and fair;
With bare legs and bare arms, a step at a time,
To the summit their burdens they bear.

They're a rising race, and truly, I ween,
They seem, to the casual beholder,
To toil with bold visage, and bolder mien,
Up the serrated face of a boulder.

And those who come down have no downcast
air,
But daintily tread the rough way,
Or pause to gaze off from the top of the stair,
As if life were a long summer day.

Much more can we see in the artist's whim
Of the island in far Italy,
As we quietly sit in the twilight dim
And musingly stare at the stair of Capri.

REVERIE

WHY have you charmed me so?
'Tis months since last we met,
Yet I cannot forget;
And this I surely know:
You still do haunt me so.

You should not treat me so.
My head is old and gray,
My youth has passed away,
But this one thing I know:
You still do haunt me so.

'Tis not your fault, I know.
My thought to you will go;
Yours wander to and fro.
And only this I know:
You still do haunt me so.

This must no further go—
I must in peace pursue
My way, apart from you.
In friendship let me go,
And cease to haunt me so.

Yet this thought pains me, too;
For pleasant thoughts of thee
Wreathe in my memory:
I cannot bid thee go,
You still do charm me so.

A CHRISTMAS ODE

(Owed to my newsboy.)

THE winter blast is high, my boy,
And soon the snow will fly, my boy,
As heretofore;

So, when my evening news you bring,
Don't give it just a careless fling,
As if 'twere but a worthless thing—

Aim high, my boy,
Let fly, my boy,
And land it at the door!

My dooryard is so wide, my boy,
My patience has been tried, my boy,
In days before,

By searching in the gloomy night
For papers sometimes lost to sight—
The victims of the wild wind's spite.

Aim high, my boy,
Let fly, my boy,
And land it at the door!

The toying winds delight, my boy,
To catch it in its flight, my boy,
And twist it o'er.

They love to take it on their wings
From one of your nonchalant flings
And hide it under plants and things.

Aim high, my boy,
Let fly, my boy,
And land it at the door!

You know my slippered feet, my boy,
Shrink from the icy sleet, my boy,
 It makes them sore.
It brings chilblains, and other chills,
Sore throat, the grippe, and other ills,
Coughs, colds, and heavy doctors' bills.
 Aim high, my boy,
 Let fly, my boy,
And land it at the door!

Don't send it with a crash, my boy,
Against the window sash, my boy,
 As once before.
It makes me jump with sudden fright,
My ruddy face grows blanched and white,
My heart goes sinking out of sight.
 Aim high, my boy,
 Let fly, my boy,
And land it at the door!

Let this impress you so, my boy,
As on your rounds you go, my boy,
 From door to door,
That when you reach my house each day
You'll just recall this simple lay,
And as you give your muscles play,
 Aim high, my boy,
 Let fly, my boy,
And land it at the door!

A SUMMER IDYL

(Lake Waramaug, Conn.)

A LITTLE maid I know,
Just sweet sixteen or so,
And she's just as pleasant as a sunny day;
She scarcely looks at me,
And yet I plainly see
That I can't help but love her, anyway.

I watch her quietly
From the corner of my eye,
And notice that the boys can't keep away;
She's set their hearts aflame,
Yet sure she's not to blame,
She's *such* a demure maiden, anyway.

At times, when she is gone,
The house seems drear and lone;
I wonder if returning she'll delay;
I wonder if from town
Some laddie saunters down
To meet my winsome lassie, any way!

She flits about the house
As still as any mouse,
That watches when the kittens are at play;
And yet, whene'er the boys
Are full of fun and noise,
'Tis plain she longs to help them, anyway.

Yet when I catch her eye,
She coldly passes by,
But why she does it she will never say.
I must be growing old,
And yet I will be bold
And tell her that I love her, anyway.

Ah, me! I have a fear
That some day, quite too near,
Some handsome lad across her path will stray;
And then—you know the rest:
Two hearts supremely blest,
And there will be no longer Annie Way.

SALT SEA SENSATIONS

(To the uncomfortable one, S. S. Catalonia,
Mid-Ocean.)

How beautiful the sea!

Its charms entrance me so!

Its waves so lightly dance,

And I dance, too.

(10 minutes interval.)

How lovely is the sea,

With many a tint and hue!

Its depths so deeply blue,

And I'm blue, too.

How changeful is the sea!

It looks no longer blue,

But now appears so pale;

And I'm pale, too.

How stormy is the sea!

The gathering clouds I view—

I see its troubled breast—

I'm troubled, too.

How restless is the sea!

As far as one can view

Its waters rush and heave,

And I heave, too.

How treacherous is the sea
O'er which ships come and go
Yet ofttimes sink below—
I, too, must go
Below!

TO OUR SECRETARY

CALL us together once more,

We implore!

The absentee season is o'er,

Long evenings are with us once more,

The boys are all back again home,

The sweet happy twilight has come.

We are birds of a feather,

We'd all flock together

If you'd call us together once more.

We miss the bright sun of your smile

That our meetings is wont to beguile,

And the big chunks of wisdom that shine

When the Twilight Club gathers to dine.

Call us together once more,

We implore.

We pray you be gracious and kind.

We're starving in body and mind;

We want a good square dinner,

Each Twilight saint and sinner;

Naught else so delightful we find.

To call us again, be inclined.

Call us together once more,

We implore.

TROUBLE IN THE FAR EAST

“Hazara, Chief of one of the warlike tribes, has organized a rebellion against the Ameer, Abdurrahman Kahn, who may invoke aid from India.” (Telegram via London.)

GREAT Abdurrahman, Kahn,
Of wild Afghanistan,
Hazara 'bellion on his hands,
In far-off foreign lands.

We pity him, 'tis true,
'Tis all that we can do—
He's not American,
He's only A-meer Kahn.

P'rhaps Abdurrahman Kahn
Outwit the rebels' plan,
Turn all their schemes aslant—
And then perhaps he can't.

If England will but aid
Against the rebel raid,
You'll see, Afghanistan,
That Abdurrahman Kahn.

THE SPIRIT OF MISSIONS

I ASKED a girl with light brown hair,
Eyes of blue and cheeks all red,
“Are you working for the Master?”
And her heart beat just the faster,
As she stood so bright and fair:
“Yes, I am, sir,” soft she said.

I asked a boy with rosy face,
As past me on his way he sped,
“Are you, too, an earnest worker,
Gladly working, not a shirker—
Working where you find a place?”
“Yes, I am, sir,” bold he said.

Now of both I asked again—
Noting that their fear had fled—
“Are you of the cheerful givers,
Whose good deeds are like the rivers,
Flowing thro’ the fertile plains?”
“Yes, I am, sir,” they both said.

“When the night o’erspreads the land,
When the sun has gone to bed,
Are you going to the meeting,
Loving comrades kindly greeting—
The meeting of the Mission Band?”
“Yes, I am, sir,” they both said.

Then I put a final query—
To this had my question led:
“Do you know the heathen nation
That will have consideration
In to-night’s deliberation?”
And the answer was the cheery
“Yes, Siam, sir,” they both said.

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

(A Song of Hope.)

ON Judean hills in years long past
There flashed a glory in the sky,
As angels sang, "Peace on the earth,"
In wondrous strains of melody.

The awe-struck shepherds heard the song,
They saw the glory of the Lord;
With eager steps they pressed their way
To Bethlehem's inn with one accord.

There in a manger-cradle lay,
In swaddling clothes, the Prince of Peace.
Joy to the world! May songs of praise
And adoration never cease!

The years rolled on, and hearts grew cold;
The child, now grown to man's estate,
Endured derision, scorn and rage,
The victim of man's cruel hate.

Until at last in devilish spite
Men dragged him to the green hillside
Where, with a thief on either hand,
The Prince of Peace was crucified.

And ever since, man's furious hates
And mad designs have swept the earth
To mock the little stranger's claim
That angels echoed at his birth.

.
The heavens grew dark; the twinkling star
That led the journey of the sages
Paled in its beams and flickered out,
Enshrouded by the long Dark Ages.

For Peace had fled and War's dread woes
Have seared the earth with bloody scars,
And countless hosts have kissed the sod,
The victims of unnumbered wars.

And persecution's deadly fires,
And revolution's lurid path,
Ambition's lusts, and sword, and flame
Have marked these following years of wrath.

.
Yet once again the heavens grow bright,
The Prince moves on the hearts of men,
Impelling them to thoughts of Peace
And calmer paths of sense again.

The air is full of melody,
The far-off song is drawing near;
Again we hear the angels sing
Though faint and low the tones appear.

We catch the notes, we hear the song,
And, like the shepherds in the night,
We turn to Bethlehem, as of yore,
We haste to greet the Prince of Light!

We move in milder temper now,
The blackened night of strife has flown.
Lift up the voice! Prepare the way!
The Prince of Peace comes to his own!

Chautauqua, 1911.

A SUITABLE NAME

(For the Temple of Fame.)

I HAVE called o'er the list of the great
In search of a suitable name.
It has been lots of fun, and I have hit upon one
To go in the Temple of Fame.
He's a very ubiquitous man,
Sometimes an iniquitous man,
But he's mostly a man who does good when he
can,

And his name is (?) You've heard it.

There is Adam and Abram and Moses,
Darius and Cyrus and Saul,
Isaiah and Samuel, Alexander and Daniel,
Zenophon and Xerxes and Paul.

But *my* man's a particular man,
A very orbicular man,
All over the world his name has been whirled,
And you know it! You've heard it.

There's Homer and Caesar and Knox,
Columbus and Virgil and Plato,
Shakespeare and Lord Byron, Tom Paine and
O'Brien,

And P. G.—that's Peter the Great, Oh!
My man's an illustrious man,
He's a very industrious man.
He never will shirk his duty or work,
And his name is (?) You know it!

There's Longfellow, Bryant and Holmes,
Napoleon, Barnum and Cook,
Dear old Cicero, Messrs. Morton, Bliss & Co.
Burton, Jefferson and Sheridan Shook.
 My man is a sagacious man,
 A somewhat mordacious man.
His scintillant wit, without hurting, can hit,
And his name is (?) You've heard it!

Then there's Calvin and Grinnell and Clay,
Lowell, Webster, Dante and Lenoir,
Lord Nelson, Ed. Harrigan, Gen. Grant and
Phil. Sheridan,
 Who "fit with *me* into the war."
 But *my* man's an oracular man,
 A very spectacular man.
You are all in a maze as at him you gaze,
And his name is (?) You've heard it!

He's a poet—a scholar—a priest,
 A soldier—a statesman—a sage,
A landsman—a sailor—an artist—a tailor,
 He's the foremost man of the age.
 For he's a most rational man,
 A world-wide, international man;
All lands of the earth he claims for his birth
And his name is JOHN SMITH.

THE CHEERFUL GIVER

Go forth, little coin, on your mission of love
And do all the good that you can;
The angels of mercy look down from above
To see what I'm doing for man.

The minister told us to-day of the woe
And sin that is cursing the earth,
And so I suppose you had better go
And help along all you are worth.

You are little, I know, but no doubt there'll be
more
To aid in the great work in view,
And nobody knows, on that far-away shore,
How much e'en a penny can do.

I ought to give something to aid in the work;
You'll help along somewhat, I guess;
You see you are sent because you're a cent
And I find that I have nothing less!

MY VIS-A-VIS

(By a "Stay-at-Home.")

You are back, I see,
And I'm so glad. It is so sweet
Once more to gaze across the street
No more an empty chair to see.
These days have weary been to me,
But now, you're back, I see.

You're back, I see.
For days I gazed across the way
In earnest hope that each new day
Would bring you into sight once more
To cheer my labors as before;
And now, you're back, I see.

You're back, I see.
I hope you've had a glorious time
Sojourning in some other clime,
On mountain height, by woodland lake,
Or ocean's shore where billows break;
And now, you're back, I see.

You're back, I see.
I tarried here and did my task
Each weary day. I'd only ask
That through your window I might see
Your shapely form, my Vis-a-vis;
And now, you're back, I see.

You're back, I see.
Turn round and look across the street.
Just give our eyes a chance to meet
And make my irksome task grow light.
You surely do not treat me right,
For still your back, I see.

Your back alone, I see!
I ne'er have seen you face to face.
You see it's a peculiar case,
For though you are my Vis-a-vis,
You never yet have thought of me,
And every time I glance at thee
I only know, your back, I see.

IGNIS FATUUS

(An Arcadian Idyl.)

WHEN you go to Digby town
 You must surely write it down
To put up at The Myrtle's pleasant shades.
 It is such a homelike place,
 And the housemaids, full of grace,
Will steal your heart away—those lovely
 maids—
For they wear the oldtime cap and kirtle
 At The Myrtle.

You will be as in a dream,
 For Evangeline will seem
Reincarnated and moving as of yore.
 And you will think that Time has turned,
 For the joy of all concerned,
His hourglass back a century or more
When you see them wear the cap and kirtle
 At The Myrtle.

The dress is not a mystery,
 But a bit of ancient history
That has wandered down the years from long
 ago,
When the girls of Arcadie
Were so beautiful to see;

But their successors are as pretty, charming,
 bright and witty
When they wear the oldtime cap and kirtle
 At The Myrtle.

This advice we jotted down
 And when we reached the Digby town
We told Jehu, who drove us up the street,
 To seek "The Myrtle Inn,"
 For 'twould be a mortal sin
To come so far and not to see the sweet
Young maidens wear the oldtime cap and kirtle
 At The Myrtle.

Alack, and well-a-day!
 How it grieves my heart to say
That most sorely disappointed were we all,
 For though we watched with care
 Not a maiden young and fair,
Old and ugly, slim and fat, short or tall,
Saw we wear the oldtime cap and kirtle
 At The Myrtle.

DRUMS AND BUGLES

MILITARY VERSE

DRUMS AND BUGLES

(Cedar Creek, Virginia, October 19, 1864.)

Surprise. .

HARK! hark to the drums,
Fretting the air of the startled morn!
How the long roll comes,
Waking the echoes in early dawn!

Far on our left, see
Mists on the valley, mountain and hill!
Twig, bush, and tall tree,
Wrapped in a ghost-pall, murky and still.

Down through the white mist
Struggle the rays of the morning light—
Flashes of amethyst—
Greeting but faintly the straining sight.

Veiled in the thin light
Silently covering the meadows, see
Bayonets flashing bright
Over the long lines of infantry.

See! they are on us!
Rank upon rank through the haze they pour,
Breaking upon us
Like waves of the sea, with angry roar.

Out of the thickets
Comes the foe as 'twere dragons' teeth sown,
Scattering our pickets
Like wind when it blows the ripe thistle-down.

Now the big guns bay,
Adding their roar to the musket's note—
Now wilder the fray—
Hear the shell hiss from the cannon's throat!

Hark! hark to the drums!
Now the sounds change—they tell of defeat.
Louder the wail comes—
Sullenly now they are beating "retreat."

.

And the sun, as it lifted and shone through the
haze,
Looked down on an army all shattered and
torn,
Saw our leaders disheartened—our men in a
daze
And twenty guns lost in the early morn.

Rally.

Hear the bugles blow!
Halting the disordered lines of men;
How clear the notes go,
Rousing them up to duty again.

Behind the stone walls,
Offering screen from the enemy's sight,
Answering the sharp calls,
Broken battalions in squads reunite.

Across the broad pike
O'er which we toiled in days but just gone
Regiments mass, like
Rock-ridges by sudden upheaval thrown.

To right and left, see,
Leaving the woods and wheeling in line
Troops of cavalry,
Rattling with sabre and clanking carbine.

On low swelling knolls,
See batteries in position wheel,
And from the guns rolls
The iron torrent of shot and shell.

Again hear bugles blow!
Sharply they ring in the mid-day air;
How shrill the notes flow
Sounding "Advance," reverse to repair.

Victory.

Where Winchester lies
Far to the North, on its hills of green,
Faint dust-clouds arise,
Like specks on the distant horizon seen.

There's a shout in the rear:
Faintly it comes from the hills away,
But nearer, and near—
Rolling along like storm-driven spray,

Still nearer it sounds,
Till galloping down in the bright sunshine
Our old leader bounds,
And gallant Sheridan sweeps down the line!

Hear the bugles blow!
Triumphant trumpetings long and large!
Hear the wild notes flow,
Fiercely sounding mad calls for a charge!

.

And the sun, as it set o'er the Western hills
Looked down on our troops (no more scat-
tered and torn)
In our old camps again—how the memory
thrills!—
And forty guns won since the later morn.

L'Envoi

Rich harvests have oft been reaped in that
valley
In halcyon years, free from tumult and war,
But richer by far was the glean of that rally
In the golden October of "sixty-four."

CALL THE ROLL!

"CALL the roll, sergeant!" Thro' the live-long
day

The surging tide of battle rose and fell;
And when the evening came, o'ercast and gray,
The hissing shot and shell
And frantic yell
Had ceased their chilling cry and died away.

"Call the roll, sergeant!" When the day was
done

The crippled ranks, that in the early morn
Had almost thought the field already won,
Like the late autumn corn,
Shattered and torn,
Stood in the trenches that with gore had run.

"Call the roll, sergeant! Answer roll call, men!

Count up the dead, the fallen and the lost!

To-morrow's sun may see the fight again,

The clinking bayonets crossed!

Sum up the cost

At which we've held this fearful slaughter-pen!

"Call the roll, sergeant!" In the misty light

The call went on; but many a name

Gave no reply. The silence of the night

Told how a life's brief flame

For transient fame

Had suddenly gone out in the fierce fight.

Call the roll to-day! Years have gone since
then.

No more we hear the battle's sullen roar.
In peace our days go hurrying by, yet when
From year to year we meet
And comrades, comrades greet,
Some face is missed we ne'er shall see again.

Call the roll again! For, ceaseless, day by
day

The weary toil of life goes ever on.
Each year some comrade drops beside the way;
Life's field is only won
When life goes down,
And all that we have loved is senseless clay.

Call the roll to-day! What though our names
be few!

Still would we number in our ranks the
brave,
And call from memory's store the lost and true,
Who, nobly dying, gave
Their lives to save
The honor of our flag, the spangled blue.

WAITING MUSTER-OUT

1865

BENEATH the flag

In Winter's blast and Summer's sun
How slow the years did run!

How time did lag

While we our weary watches kept
Against the foe, while loved ones slept.

When peace had come

And war its banners furled once more,
The breezes to us bore

The song of home,

While we, impatient, dreamed about
The happy day for muster-out.

1894

Long years have passed

With varying round of good and ill—
How slow the years move still!

We stand at last

And backward look along those years,
Recalling by-gone joys and fears,

Yet forward, too;

Our camping here cannot be long;
We hear another song,

Our home in view,

While we, expectant, dream about
And wait our final muster-out.

RETROSPECT

1887

SINCE last we met the circling months have run
Their accustomed round, with varying grief
and cheer ;
And we who, years ago, were comrades first acquainted
Once more in yearly meeting gather here.

Since last we met the Autumn's golden hours
Crept lingering on, crowned with rich harvest gain ;
While slowly lengthening shadows closed the days,
And shortening twilight covered hill and plain.

Winter, in snowy garb and mantle white ;
With storm, and wind, and howling tempest blast ;
With its rich tracery of frost and icy gem—
Bleak Winter, too, is with the silent past.

Spring, like an airy maid, came tripping on,
Blushing with flowers and radiant with dew,
Filled with bright hopes, with bud and leaf and spray—
Promise fulfilled of resurrection ever new.

And once again, in glowing Summer's heat,
Here by cool waters meets our band once
more,
As, gathering from our distant homes, we greet
Each welcome face, and tell our battles o'er.

How time runs on! The months and seasons
pass
Like dreams that flit before us while we
sleep,
The years go hurrying by like storm-pressed
clouds
Urged through the sky by winds' impetuous
sweep.

Standing to-day, within this present hour,
We turn and, looking back, with deep
thought scan
The years since first we grasped each other's
hands,
A third of earthly life's allotted span.

Here would we rest—our days of warring
done;
Here pause awhile as we review the past,
Recalling, one brief moment, scenes that shall
Fill History's page as long as time shall
last.

Nor would we still indulge one bitter thought
'Gainst those who bravely faced us in the
field.

Brothers once more, henceforth our motto be
One land, one flag, one Union and one
shield!

Brothers once more, we treasure up the past
As stories of the gods of old entrance our
ears—

Brave deeds of Spartan bands in story told
Eclipsed by braver deeds of later years!

Gone are our golden days; yet, year by year,
We gather to recount those days of yore,
To bind with memory's chain the scattering
threads

Of the old scenes, a part of which we were.

So, as the years go swiftly passing by,
Gilding with brighter glow the story of our
deeds,

While o'er our dulling senses comes the sigh
That swells the heart as youthful joy re-
cedes,

God grant us grace still in our riper years
To do our part. Each day may strength
be given

To conquer every foe in Life's great fight,
And pass triumphant to the joys of Heaven.

FOLLOWING THE FLAG

YOUNG men, whither bound in the hot flush of
youth,

Sturdy of limb and with hearts all aflame?
Your eager gaze turns to the far away
South—

Seek ye for riches, or honor, or fame?

“We follow the flag.”

Can ye forsake the dear friends you have
known

Since the days of your boyhood, away in the
past?

Can ye break up the sweet ties that have
grown

So closely these many years, binding you
fast?

“We follow the flag.”

Think of the father—his eye has grown dim;

Think of the mother—her hair silvery gray;

He has no other to comfort and cheer him,

She will go sadly when you are away.

“We follow the flag.”

Know ye the dangers that lie in the road,

Bullet and sabre cut, bayonet and shell,

Dungeon and prison pen, hunger's sharp
goad?

“Yes, we have heard it—we know it full well:

We follow the flag.”

In the swamps of the South lurk fever and
pain;
On the fields of Virginia death rides his pale
horse;
The meadow and upland in sunlight and rain
Are flecked with the shadow of many a
corpse.

“We follow the flag.”

“Our country, imperiled by treason’s red hand
Has called us to rally and crush out the foe;
Friends, home ties and loved ones are but cords
of sand,
Our country has called us and forward we
go.

We follow the flag.”

Old comrades, who meet in re-union once more,
With forms bowed and bent—with heads
crowned with gray,
Worn wrecks still afloat from the tempest of
war,
What moves your enfeebled heart-pulses to-
day?

“We follow the flag.”

“We followed it long in the days of our youth,
We followed it well until victory came,
We fought for that flag in the sunny South,
And we love it still in our old age the same.

We follow the flag.”

“Look on these feeble forms—see the deep
scar—

Gaze on the empty sleeve—hear the loud
crutch—

And read, in these tokens, what time cannot
mar—

The depth of devotion that cost us so much.
We follow the flag.

“Oh flag that we love—oh beacon of light,

Oh flag of our country, majestic and free
Still be thy stars and stripes emblem of right
Still shall our heart-throbs go leaping for
thee.

We follow the flag.

“Still shalt thou float, still wave thy soft folds

O’er a nation refined in the furnace of war;
Still will we render the wealth our heart holds
Of loving devotion that age cannot mar.

We follow the flag.

“And when the Commander shall summon us
home

To meet in a sweeter re-union above,
Fall gently over us, tenderly cover us,
So that in death still, oh, flag that we love,
We’ll follow the flag.”

TO OUR OLD FRIEND

SOME sing of the ladye faire—

The soft, fresh bloom of her cheek,
Her melting eyes, her glorious hair,
Her demeanor modest and meek.

I sing not the ladye faire.

And some of the country sing—

The charm of the grassy lea,
The budding flower, the bird on the wing,
The blossom on bush and tree.

I do not the country sing.

Some sing of the warrior bold—

The knight of the golden shield,
The crusader's oath, the wars of old,
The carnage on bloody field.

I sing not the warrior bold.

Some sing of the mountains gray,

With their snow-clad peaks in air,
Their wooded slopes where the wild winds play,
And the wild beast holds his lair.

I sing not the mountains gray.

Some sing of the ocean vast,

The roar of the angry sea,
The storm-tossed ship, and the straining mast
And the billows, rolling free.

I sing not the ocean vast.

Some sing of the silver moon
As she rides the summer sky,
Far up aloft like a silk balloon;
They may, if they choose—not I.
I sing not the silver moon.

I warble another song,
I sing not by other's rule.
Model of patience through ages of wrong
I sing thee, the Army Mule.
This is my present song.

Old friend of my campaign days,
Partner for many a mile,
Surely I'll lift my voice in thy praise,
Though others thy kind revile,
Old friend of my campaign days.

I sing to thee, Army Mule,
Because I know thee of old;
And thy quaint life, without ridicule,
Has never been fairly told.
I sing to thee, Army Mule.

I sing of thy earnest ways,
Thy steadily plodding gait,
The whole-lunged heartiness of thy brays,
Thy whole demeanor sedate.
I sing of thy earnest ways.

I sing of thy flopping ear,
 Waving with indolent grace
To catch the echoes in front and rear,
 Above thy impassive face.
 I sing of thy flopping ear.

I sing of thy arching mane,
 The silken gloss of thy hide,
The iron muscles that tug and strain,
 And thy restless, panting side.
 I sing of thy arching mane.

I sing of thy pensive eye,
 So still, so patient, so calm,
And yet so sly, when your foot "lets fly,"
 And makes the driver say—(naughty words);
 I sing thy expressive eye.

I sing of thy paintbrush tail,
 Pendant with motionless grace,
Or lashing thy sides like a mighty flail,
 The vexing fly to displace.
 I sing thy peculiar tail.

I sing of the gladsome note,
 That swells on the troubled air
From the awful depths of thy cavernous
 throat,
 And makes the bystander swear.
 I sing of thy gladsome note.

I sing of thee as a whole,
Verily thou art no fool,
And here I proffer with all my soul,
A health to thee, Army Mule.
Long life to thee, Army Mule.

IN MEMORIAM

MAJ. PETER VREDENBURGH.

14th N. J. Volunteers.

Killed in action Opequan, Va.

September 19, 1864.

ONCE we sang a martial strain,
With our faces to the foe;
Sweeping o'er the sultry plain,
Tramping down the ripening grain,
In the days of long ago.

Bright the sun on Opequan!
Bright the flashing river's flow!
Yet the fray but just began,
Ere our hero's life-blood ran
In the days of long ago.

Now we sing a milder lay,
While our steps unsteady go
To the West; while fades our day
To the night, not far away,
As we muse on "long ago."

Still we mourn our hero bold.
Backward, loving thoughts we throw,
For our younger love for him
Passing years can never dim,
And our love shall ne'er grow cold,
Though time speeds on and years grow old,
For one whom hap of war laid low
In the days of long ago.

IN MEMORIAM

LIEUT. JOHN C. BOOTH

14th N. J. Volunteers.

Died May 2, 1891.

In the early years, ere the Spirit of War
Was abroad in the land on its mission
of woe,
In the twilight dim, on the soft-rippling shore
Of the peaceful James,
In musical notes, soft and low
The voice of the slave was heard
As his paddle the water stirred,
Singing, "Row, row, o'er the waters so blue;
Like a fairy I float in my gum-tree canoe."

In the later years, when the Spirit of War
Inflamed every heart; and a nation in arms
Grim bivouac kept on the gun-swept shore
Of the troubled James;
When we paused in the lull of alarms,
From our camp on the hill
In the twilight still,
The voice of our comrade was heard,
In tones that our bosoms stirred,
Singing, "Row, row, o'er the waters so blue;
Like a fairy I float in my gum-tree canoe."

In these later years, when the Spirit of Peace
Has stilled the fierce passions of brothers to
rest,

We sigh as we think how our numbers de-
crease

When we meet year by year, far removed
from our quest

On the quiet James,

And the voice of our brother has touched
every breast

With that song of long ago

In musical notes, soft and low,

Singing, "Row, row, o'er the waters so blue;
Like a fairy I float in my gum-tree canoe."

Again we have met, in the Spirit of Peace,

But the voice of the singer we hear no more;

On the river beyond he has found sweet re-
lease,

In a sunlight far brighter than shone before

On the sparkling James;

But an echo comes back from that far-away
shore

And we fancy we almost hear

Those musical notes, soft and clear,

Singing, "Row, row, o'er the waters so blue;
Like a fairy I float in my gum-tree canoe."

THE MONOCACY FIGHT

FAIR in the gleam of the bright summer sky
The Capital lay in sixty-four,
While leagues away, round Petersburg's sides
Were rolling and surging the tides of war.

Securely it lay in indolent ease
In the lazy heat of the summer sun;
Flags floated gay in the dallying breeze
O'er the stately halls of fair Washington.

Little they reckoned of danger near
Who thronged the streets the livelong day.
Was not all festive and bright with cheer?
Was not the enemy far away?

.
There's a voice from the trenches,
A sound deep and shrill;
It reaches the city
From mountain and hill;
It comes o'er the plain
In accents of thunder,
(Good cause for your wonder)
"Early is marching again."

There's a cry from the valley—
A cry long and loud;
It tells its own story,
Like a dark thunder-cloud
With lightning and rain;
Heed well when ye hear it,
Needs be that ye fear it:
“Early is marching again.”

There's a cry from Potomac,
The danger is near;
The alarm is sounding
In notes sharp and clear,
“Our efforts are vain:
Rouse up, ye freemen,
Rouse ye and be men—
Early is crossing again.”

There's a voice from the city—
A wail deep and wild;
It blanches the features
Of woman and child.
Men cry as in pain:
“Early is near us,
He does not fear us,
Early is raiding again.”

There's a call to the trenches :
"The river is crossed
The enemy threatens.
Help! Help! or we're lost!"
This was the frenzied strain,
"Give us the Sixth Corps
To guard us once more
And stand as of yore
Confronting Early again."

Down from Monocacy
Comes a deep sound,
Cannon are booming
Round upon round.
Strive ye with might and with main,
Battle, ye fearless,
With bravery peerless,
Early is fighting again.

Small were our numbers,
But never a heart
Quailed at the onset;
Ours, the heroes' part,
Checker the green with slain,
Press to the battle
Mid noise and rattle;
We too are fighting again.

Right grandly we met him
Though everyone knew
We were facing an army
And our numbers were few.
What could our efforts mean
Fighting so many men
With scarcely any men
And only six guns to sixteen?

Long time we fought him,
Fought till we taught him
The Blue Crosses were blocking his way.
We could but meet him,
Not hope to beat him,
Only to keep him
Delayed for a night and a day.
Well-paid our losses,
Could the Red and White Crosses
But reach the scene of the fray.

When at last on his sight
Gleamed the capital's spires—
The goal of his march
And ardent desires—
With gloom and despair
He saw that, to greet him,
All ready to meet him
The Red and White Crosses were there.
Then, barred from his prey,
In sullen displeasure,
Chagrined beyond measure,
He turned back and went his way.

OPEQUAN

Shenandoah Valley, Va., September 19, 1864.
Anniversary Ode, 1908.

WHERE were you forty and four years ago
On this nineteenth day of September?
Comrades, come join us; take part in the talk
And tell us just what you remember.

Turn your thoughts backward and think of
the past,
And with it let memory dally;
While pleased recollections come thick and
fast
When you think of our work in "The Valley."

Clear rose the sun in the heavens that day
And soon our whole column was moving,
For at last we had brought old Early to bay
And his mettle we longed to be proving.

Sore were the memories of Maryland's field—
Of our stand by Monocacy's water—
Bright were our hopes to force him to yield,
Though the fight here might even be hotter.

Slowly the sun moved up in the sky,
As we pressed on the ranks of the foeman
With a cheer and a dash that soon made him
fly,
Though resisting with courage so Roman!

Harder we pressed on, through Winchester
town,

Not once giving time for a rally,
And when the day closed, in headlong retreat
We had driven him far up "The Valley."

He left in our hands as trophies that day
Five guns and nine flags we had taken.
He fought a good fight, but we drove him away
And thus proved our courage unshaken.

But the cost! Alas! behind us there lay
Our wounded, the dead and the dying—
Dear price to pay for the gain of a day,
E'en though we had sent the foe flying!

Still rolls Opequan on toward the sea;
Still droop, on its banks, the green willows;
Still smile the meadow, the hilltop and lea;
Still waves the ripe wheat in long billows.

Clear shines the sun in the heavens above,
In these golden days of September;
The while we look back to the days that we
love,
And call up the things we remember!

IN EVERGREEN

UP and down God's-acre street
Hear the throbbing of the drum!
 Bom! Bom! Bom-bom-bom!
Hear the tread of heavy feet!
Hear the wailing of the fife!
See! the files of soldiers come
Marching to the muffled drum,
 Bom! Bom! Bom-bom-bom!

Not in flush of early life,
Not our youth in gaudy dress,
Banners gay and nimble step,
Well-lined ranks that eager press
Marching to the drum and fife;
But a line of aged men,
Grizzled, crippled, worn and gray,
And the ranks are loose and thin
As they come along the way,
Marching to the wailing fife,
Stepping to the throbbing drum,
 Bom! Bom! Bom-bom-bom!

See the faces seamed by years,
See the frosted hair of age,
Empty sleeves—the limping knee—
Silent tales of War's stern wage.

At the front there goes the flag
Not to breezes flaunting free,
Held in leash by raven ties
Speaking silent eulogy.
Every comrade's heaving breast
Bears an emblem sheathed in gloom;
One they loved has gone to rest
And they bear him to the tomb,
To the waiting, quiet tomb.

Through the paths of calm God's-acre
Hear the throbbing of the drum!
To the presence of its Maker
Has the parted spirit come;
But the body here they lay,
Yield they to the grave their trust,
There to rest till Gabriel's day,
Earth to earth and dust to dust.

.

This the end of earthly strife,
Hear the wailing of the fife!
Hear the throbbing of the drum!
Bom! Bom! Bom-bom-bom!

AFTER THE BATTLE

WHAT awful shapes are these that blur the hill
And mutely stare into the azure sky?
What ghastly forms be they that lie so still—
Stiff, swollen corpses erstwhile full of life
And love and hope and hate and deadly strife?
How still they lie!

Above, the golden sun rolls on his way
And floods with light the hilltop and the
plain.
Around, the soft winds blow and breezes stray
Among these piles of dead, as if to bear
Their parted spirits to the upper air,
Released from pain.

The sword is trampled and the green grass
stained
With clots of blood and brain and
mangled flesh;
The trees are spotted as if Heaven had rained
In wrath, red showers to bathe the earth in gore
And drenched the fields with crimson, evermore
To weep afresh.

And all around us lie, heaped upon heap,
 Distorted forms once full of lusty force,
Now torn by shot or shell or deadly sweep
Of hurtling rifle-fire that filled the air
With flying death, sweeping the breastworks
 bare
 In its hot course.

Look on this form, contorted, blacked by heat,
 Repulsive in its hideous shape—affright
With the fierce look of hate that found its seat
In the fixed eye-balls whose wide-staring gaze
With all its horrid gruesomeness amaze
 And stuns our sight.

What awful passions tore his frenzied heart
 In the close touch of combat hand to hand?
What murderous anger this that can impart
To the dead eye that fiendish, furious glare
As if the hates of Hell had centered there
 At Death's command!

Yet here is one whose slender boyish frame
 And childish face, tell of a gentle home.
At duty's call, a warrior he came,
Though but a youth, nor deemed his fancy
 wild
To tempt a man's endurance, though a child;
 So did he come.

And here he lies, a smile upon his face
As if in that last gasp he caught a sight
Of the old home and felt the fond embrace
Of her whose prayers had followed where he
fared.

See! in his hand her picture, as he stared
Through death's dim light.

Oh, why should man infuriate passions loose,
And, like a tiger pouncing on its prey,
Leap to the throat of fellow man, and choose
The devilish arts of carnage and of war
To drench our mother earth with reeking gore
In deadly fray!

Sweet Peace, forever brood above our land,
Bid the fell hates of men no longer swell,
Check the loose tongue, that flaming firebrand,
And bid the waves of madness break no more.
The maddest moving of man's heart is War:
And War is Hell!

PRIVATE M'GINN

DID ever you hear of Private McGinn?

Private McGinn of Company Q?

A roaring good fellow with a big double chin
And a deep-seated yearning for "mountain
dew"!

"To waste it were sin, so here's looking at
you,"

Said Private McGinn, of Company Q.

A rollicking lad was Private McGinn.

Wherever he went, 'twas as good as a play.

Unbounded good humor abounded in him

And livened the labors and toils of the day.

"A joke or a grin, on me or on you,"

Said Private McGinn of Company Q.

The cook needed wood for the company fire,

So Private McGinn, he chopped down a tree

And then chopped it up. "I only desire

To work it both ways. 'Tis funny," said he,

"Down and up. I must win if stoutly I
hew,"

Said Private McGinn of Company Q.

He drew a new coat, and strutted about
As gay as a peacock, till someone said
"It's too short in the back!" "I know it," said
Mac,
"It's a little short now, but I know it will be
Long enough before another comes in,
So I've nothing to rue," said Private McGinn
of Company Q.

With a goose in his arms, he marched into
camp.
"Halt there!" said the guard, "you've been
robbing a farm."
"Not so," said McGinn, "I was taking a tramp,
And he hissed at the flag!—it made my blood
warm—
'Twas a rebel's own sin. What else could
I do?
I gathered him in!"—said Private McGinn
of Company Q.

When once he fell sick, he wasted away
To a skeleton wreck, and daily grew thin.
The boys all felt sad as he failed day by day
And watched for the end of poor Private McGinn.
"They may gather me in; it looks pretty
blue,"
Said Private McGinn of Company Q.

The doctor prescribed a big mustard plaster
To put on his chest. Says Mac, " 'Tis a treat
To have such a blanket, but, doctor, I think
There's a great deal of mustard for so little
meat!

I'm so dreadful thin, and delicate, too!"

Said Private McGinn of Company Q.

But Private McGinn took a turn for the good
And answered to company call once more;
The huge mustard plaster had done its work
well

And gave him a chance to *walk* out the door.

"At last by the skin of my teeth I pulled
through,"

Said Private McGinn of Company Q.

Its effect lingered long, for when the war
closed

And the news of surrender was noised about,
Peace came in good time, and with Company Q
Our Private McGinn was *mustered* out!

"I've been out and in, but now I am
through,"

Said Private McGinn of Company Q.

THE SIGNAL GUN

(Petersburg, April 1, 1865.)

NINE long and weary months
Had we besieged the town.
The winter now was past
And spring came slowly on,
While closer drew the beleaguering lines
To mock the desperate foe's designs.

The Chieftain spoke his will;
"The hour has come at length,
No longer stand we still.
Once more we'll test our strength,
Once more throw down the battle gage
And write new names on History's page."

Five Forks and Hatcher's Run
Revealed their weakened power,
Presage of victory
In the decisive hour.
Yet bastions, forts and earthworks gray
Frowned in our front the livelong day.

"The army moves at dawn;
Sleep on your arms to-night
Prepared for instant march.
Keep all your fires alight.
The Country trusts its soldiers true
To grandly end the work they do.

"Await the signal gun,
Fort Sedgwick fires at three;
Then storm the works in front
However strong they be."
This was the way the orders ran
Passed down the line from man to man.

In serried ranks the troops
Responded to the call,
Knowing full well that some
Brave boys would surely fall.
To trench and fort and low redoubt
With silent step they all went out.

Who, who can tell the thoughts
Beneath the twinkling star,
Of home, and loved ones dear,
Beloved, though afar!
For who might know what deadly toll
The assault would task the muster roll.

Yet who would grudge to die
If but the fight be won,
Though carnage dire might be
Under the morrow's sun?
Ten thousand braves might kiss the sod,
Rejoiced to die for land and God.

From silence deep, profound,
The gun the echoes woke.
Mahone with sharp response
In grim defiance spoke.
Quick down the line the tumult ran
As every gun its fire began.

What thunders filled the air
From their deep brazen throats;
Death's diapason sung
With wild and varying notes,
While far away with sullen roar
Boomed with deep bass the Monitor.

Musket fire and blinding flame—
Bark of gun and crash of shell—
Rifle crack and hurtling hail—
Lightning flash and din of Hell—
Into this seething storm they went
With death or glory well content.

“Forward! ’long the whole line!
Forward!” You know the rest,
How like an ocean surge
They stormed and swept the crest,
And how, before the midday sun,
Their glorious task *was* grandly done,
And Petersburg was won!

DOWN THE COMING YEARS

A Dedication Ode.

July 14, 1906.

SAID the Rifle to the Drum,
"From my throat
Flies the bullet with sharp note
And its death-bespeaking hum.
With my kiss
Men shall hear a deadly hiss
And to my dread power succumb."

Said the Drum, in quick reply,
"When your ball
Claims its victim, that is all;
I sound the charge, and then *I* cry
Louder still,
Stirring hearts with deeper thrill,
Nerving them to do or die."

Said the Bayonet to the Fife,
"I am steel.
With men's stern resolves I deal;
I am master in the strife,
In my gleam
Flashes Death's unerring beam;
I am Arbiter of Life."

Spake the other, "But your work
Soon is o'er,
One mad charge and nothing more.
In my cry what passions lurk!
Fierce and shrill
Sound my notes o'er field and hill,
Ever sounding, never still!"

To the Bugle said the Sword:
"In my light
Men attain to Fame's proud height;
I of thrones and kings am lord.
At my power
Sovereigns cringe and tyrants cower;
Heroes claim me for reward."

Then the Bugle answer made:
"Swords may rust,
Heroes crumble into dust,
But the martial strain I played
Shall ring on,
In the hearts of sire and son,
Till the stars in heaven shall fade."

Said the Cannon to the Shaft:
"I have turned
Tides of battle. Men have learned
To fear me when I speak—have quaffed
Death's full cup
When I bade them take it up—
Thousands drinking one fell draught.

“Kings and crowns have leaned on me!
I am MIGHT!

Rule I in my own strong right,
Umpire over land and sea,
None but fools dispute with me.
When I speak,
Fierce and stern, my wrath to wreak,
I make nations bow the knee.

“Years ago when Europe drew
Every sword,
Mine was the decisive word!
I Napoleon o’erthrew.

’Twas the gun
Sealed the tyrants’ doom and won
Trafalgar and Waterloo.

“When, too, in a later day
This fair land
Wrested with the Southron band—
Brothers meeting in fierce fray—
Then my power
Gained for aye in Fate’s full hour
Gettysburg and Mobile Bay.

“Later still, when Japan’s braves
Swarmed the East,
Crowding to the infernal feast
Of Death—to glorious graves,
I won the fight—
Looking down the frowning height,
Monarch over hills and waves.

“Wonder not that myriad throats
Hail me King,
To my muzzle garlands bring!
Swelling music for me floats.
You shall see
Nations henceforth worship me;
Fear they all my thundering notes.”

Silent long the Column stood,
Then at length
Slowly spoke: “I know your strength,
Know your might, your power for good;
Know your pride,
Vaster than aught else beside;
Know full well your fiery mood.

“You have won by sheer brute force;
In your path
High are piled the sheaves of wrath;
Blood and death attend your course.
O’er the heaps
Endless gloom her vigil keeps,
Heaps of mangled man and horse.

“In the homes where dwelt your prey,
Ruined homes!
Hope nor sunshine ever comes.
Widows weep the live-long day;
Children cry;
Parents sob in agony
For the one who marched away.

“Yes, I know your mighty power;
But I know
I a loftier thought can show.
Far above your plane I tower;
I can teach
Lessons far beyond your reach,
Lessons for the weightiest hour.

“When your bore is choked with rust;
When no note
Issues from your strident throat;
When you pass, as pass you must,
I shall stand,
Honored in a grateful land,
Pointing to the God we trust.

“Little ones will round me play,
In their joy
Bringing doll and hoop and toy.
Whiling thus the hours away,
They shall learn
Deeds that live and thoughts that burn,
Ever in their hearts to stay.

“Youths and maidens strolling near,
Pledging vows
Underneath the spreading boughs,
Careless of the coming year—
Trusting youth—
They shall pledge a higher troth
When they see me standing here.

"Sires and mothers, too, shall come,
Heeding well
All the story I shall tell,
Even though my lips be dumb;
They shall know
In their hearts the patriot glow
That shall foster love at home.

"Aged men, with honored scars,
Dragging slow
Trembling limbs, as on they go;
Veterans of old-time wars,
Looking back
On the years o'er memory's track
Shall salute the stripes and stars.

"Thoughts like these shall be my task,
Lifting hearts
From these sordid lower parts,
Till we see calm Reason bask
In the light
God gives when we seek the Right
And from Passion tear the mask."

.
Here stand, O Monument, forever stand,
And let thy grace,
The beauty of thy form, attract the eye
And lead the enraptured thought
To heights of great resolve,
That souls may trace
A stronger love of home and native land

And God, who governs all beneath the sky!

Here may a later race,
When we have passed away, be brought
To muse on noble themes, and taught
New sense of civic life and patriot pride,
While they recall
Those names who heard their country's call
And without murmur for their country died!

O Sun! light up this marble image of our dead!
Let thy bright beams illumine with grace divine
The impassive brow, and o'er each feature shed
A radiance that shall forever shine!

O Stars! in Heaven's blue vault appearing one
by one,
Shine softly down in loving tenderness
When daylight fades and night comes creeping
on,
And touch his lips as with a woman's kiss.

O Wind! blow gently round this rigid form,
Nor stir the drooping flag we hold so dear;
Right well it floated in the battle-storm,
Right loyally we pledge devotion here.

Sun, Stars and Winds! Ye voiceless tenants
of the sky,
To thee we come; to thee we make our prayer;
Receive this emblem of a love that cannot die,
And thro' all coming years make it your care.

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